



(12) **United States Patent**
Biskeborn et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 9,472,949 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Oct. 18, 2016**

(54) **PROTECTION OF DEVICE FROM
ELECTROSTATIC DISCHARGE (ESD)
DAMAGE**

USPC 174/156, 259; 361/56, 212, 220, 323;
360/323
See application file for complete search history.

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
patent is extended or adjusted under 35
U.S.C. 154(b) by 413 days.

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(21) Appl. No.: **13/902,695**

Primary Examiner — Courtney Smith

(22) Filed: **May 24, 2013**

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(65) **Prior Publication Data**

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US 2014/0347766 A1 Nov. 27, 2014

(57) **ABSTRACT**

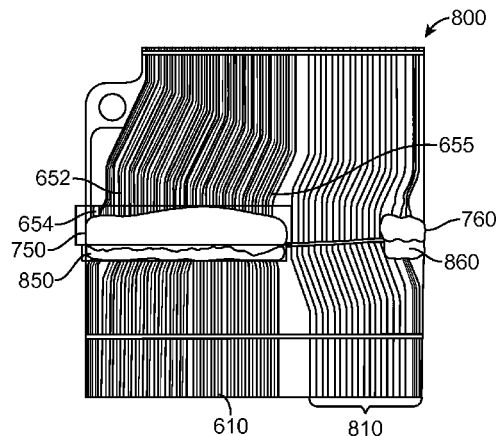
(51) **Int. Cl.**
H05K 1/02 (2006.01)
H02H 9/04 (2006.01)
G11B 5/40 (2006.01)
H01R 43/02 (2006.01)

Embodiments of the invention relate to electrostatic discharge (ESD) protection. One embodiment includes a first dissipative adhesive (DA) connected to at least a portion of multiple leads in a first plane of a flexible cable in a coverage area for providing ESD protection to at least one element of an electronic device. A common bus bar is connected to the leads in a second plane of the flexible cable. Conductivity of the common bus bar is greater than conductivity of the first DA and the first plane and the second plane are different planes of the flexible cable.

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **H02H 9/045** (2013.01); **G11B 5/40**
(2013.01); **H01R 43/0249** (2013.01); **H05K**
1/0259 (2013.01); **Y10T 29/49169** (2015.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC G11B 5/40; Y10T 29/49169; H01R
43/0249; H01R 13/6485; H05K 1/0259;
H05K 1/0393

13 Claims, 10 Drawing Sheets



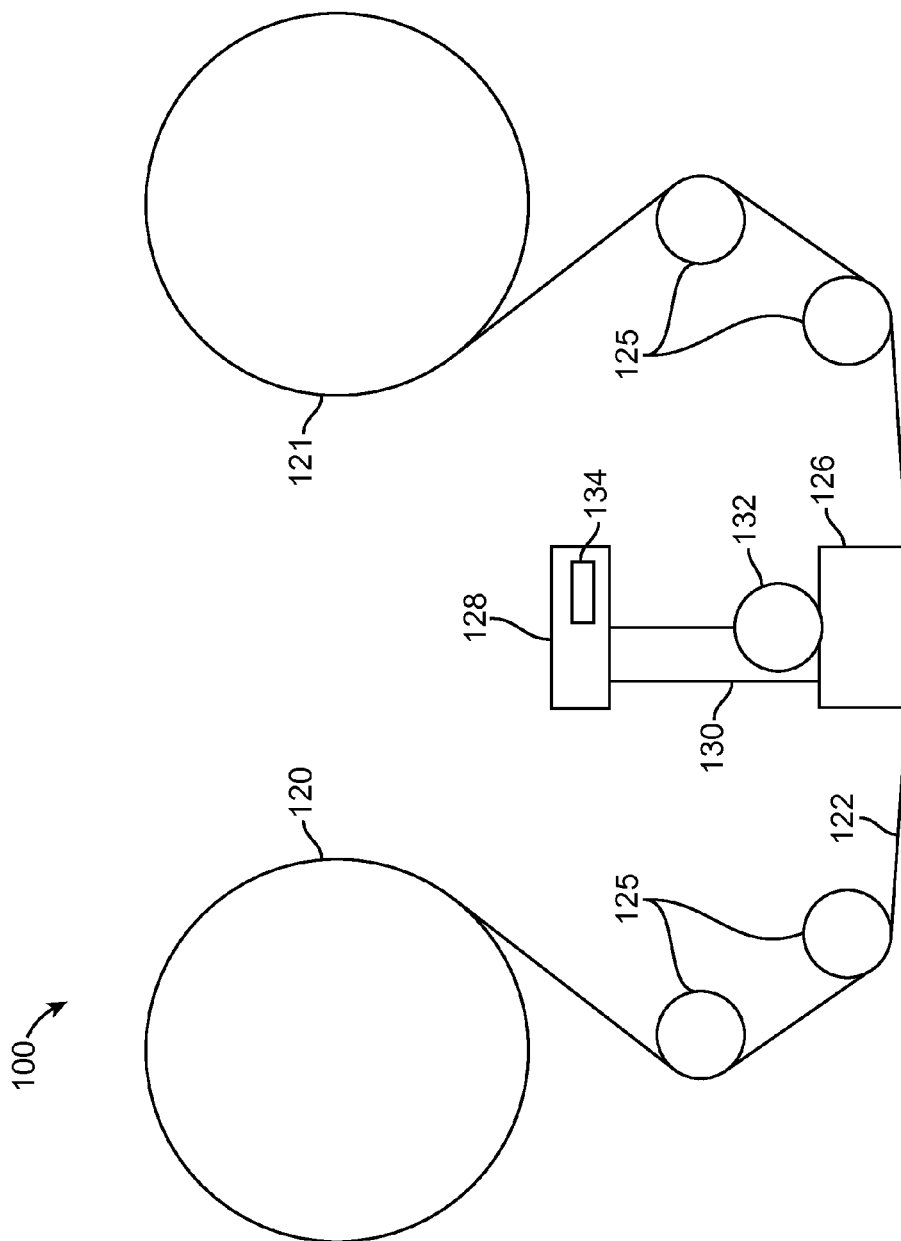


FIG. 1

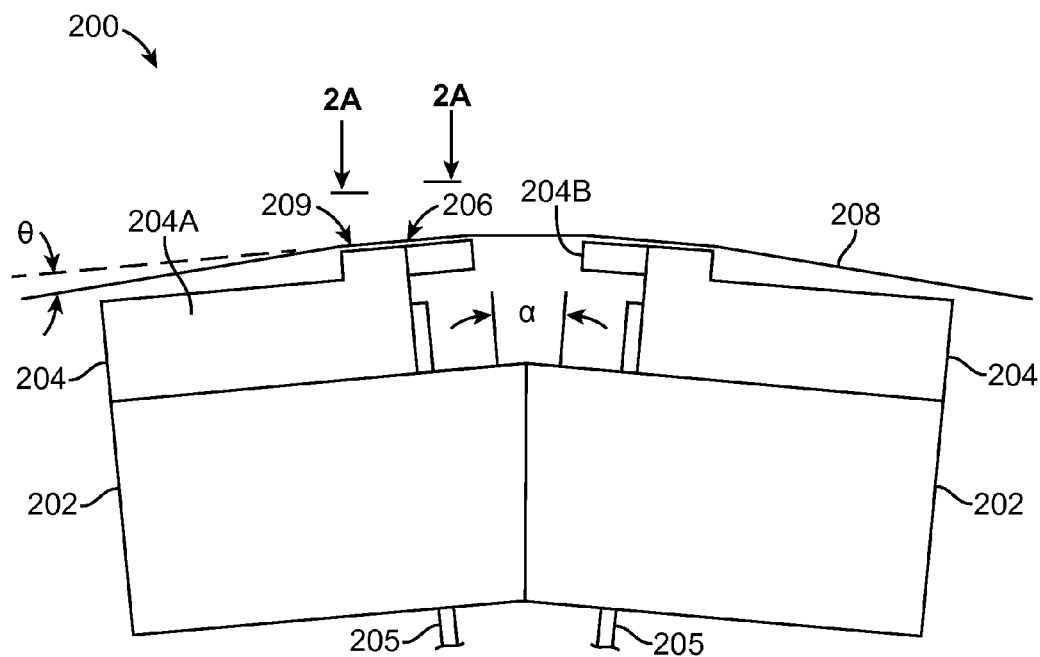


FIG. 2

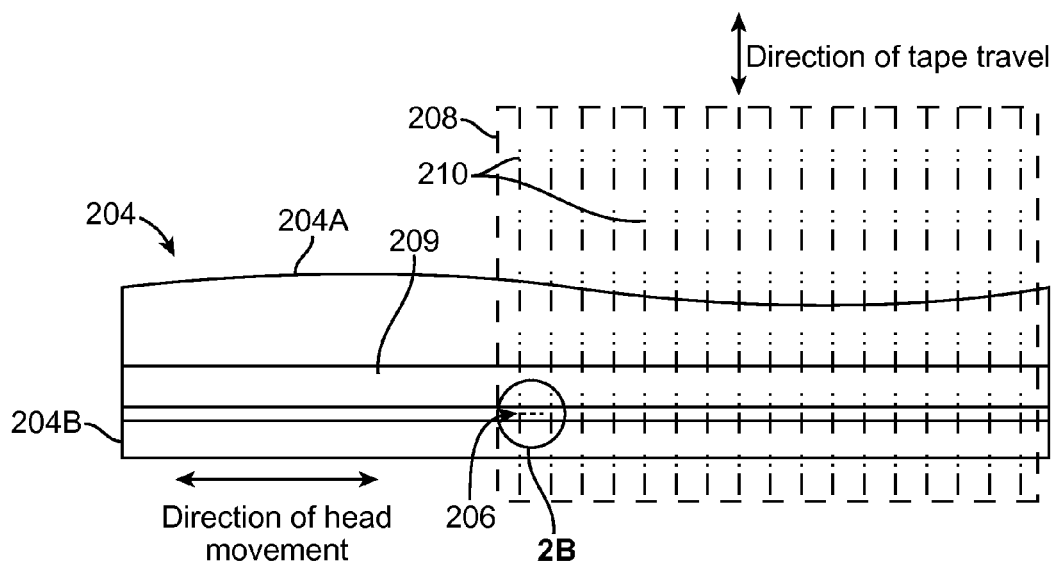


FIG. 2A

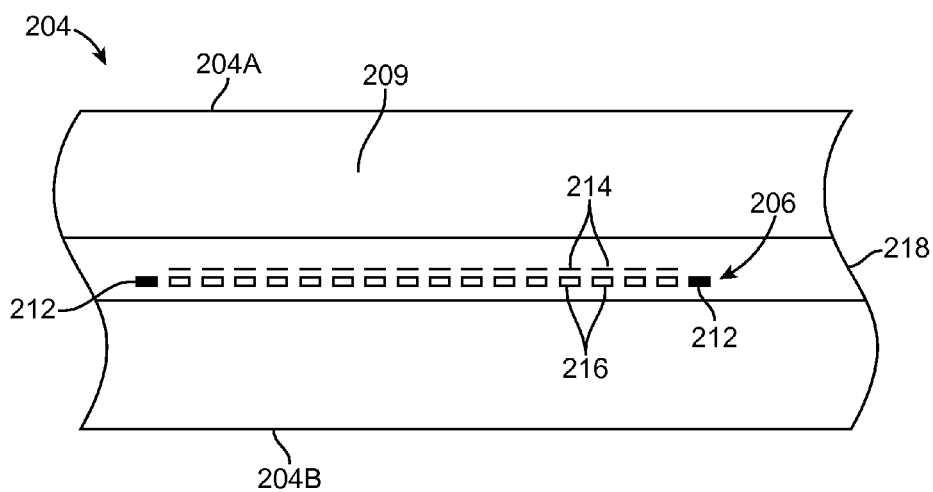


FIG. 2B

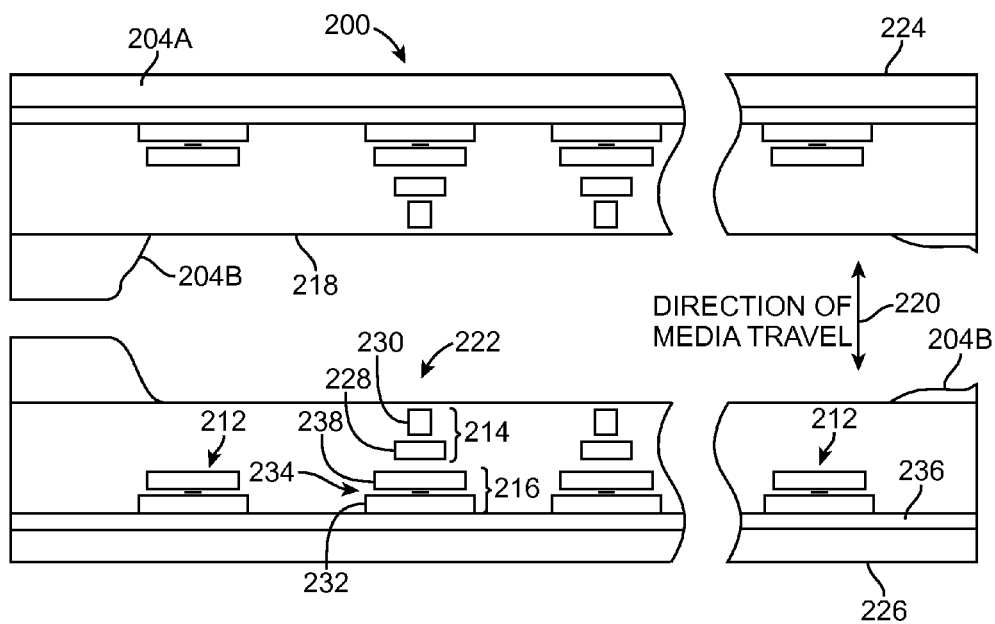


FIG. 2C

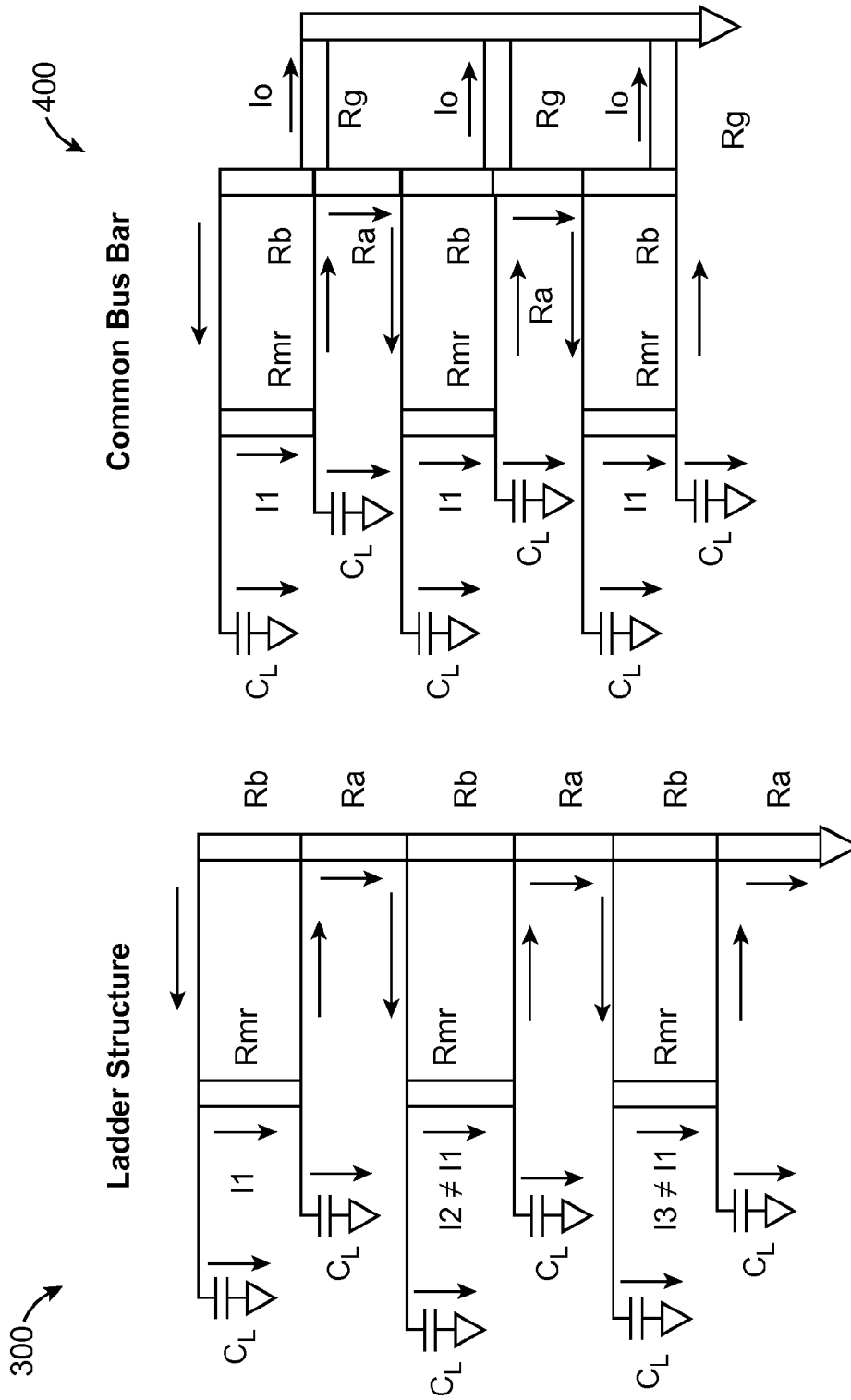


FIG. 4

FIG. 3

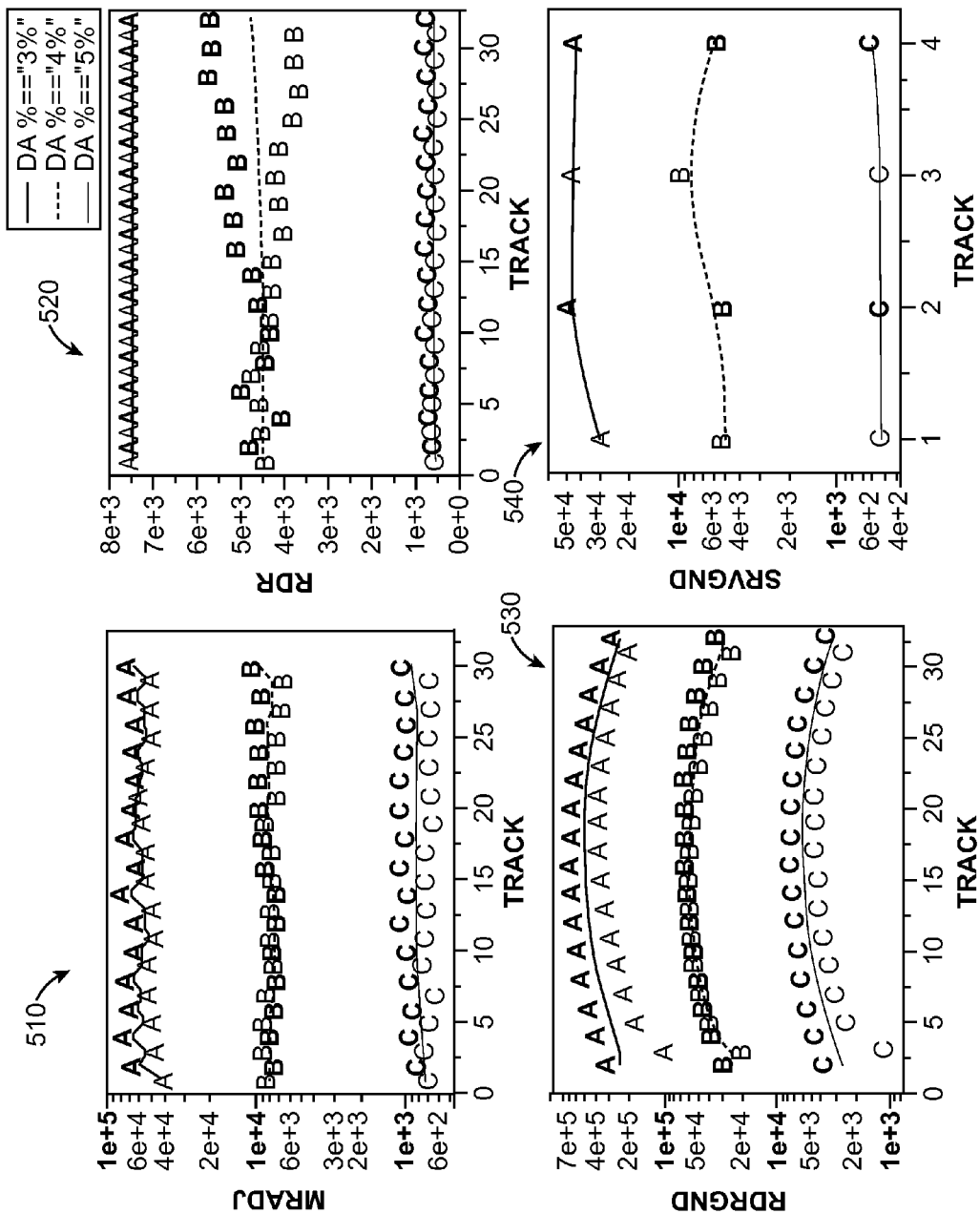


FIG. 5

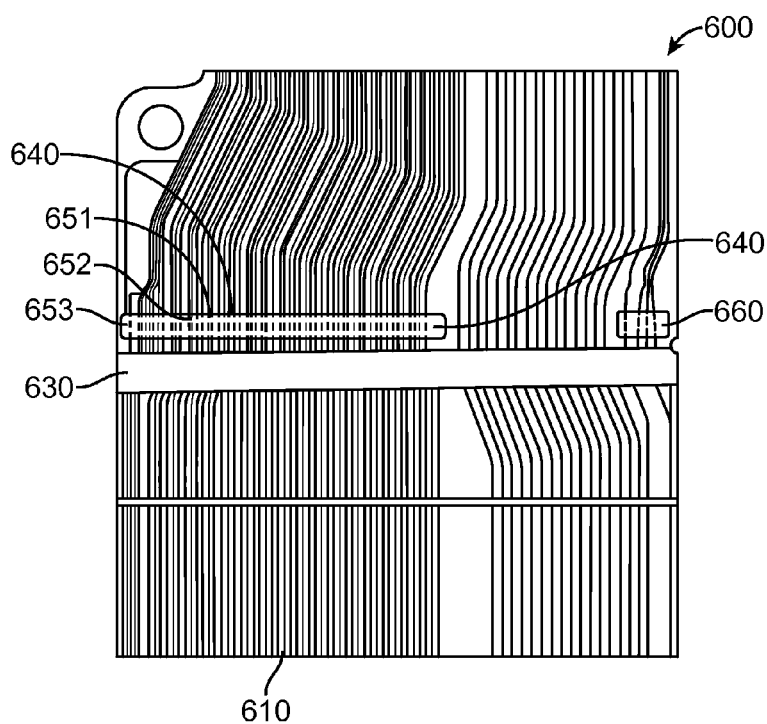


FIG. 6

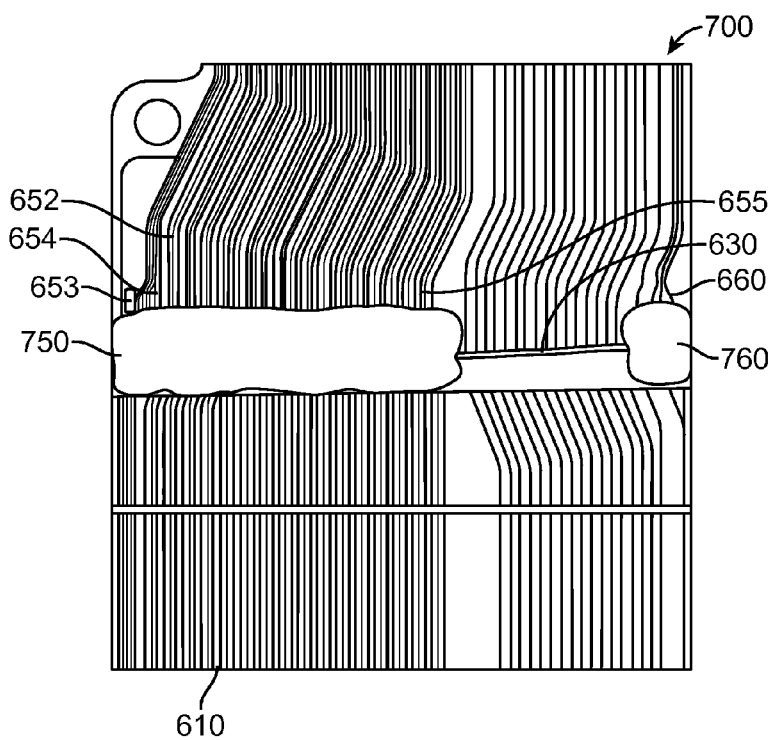


FIG. 7

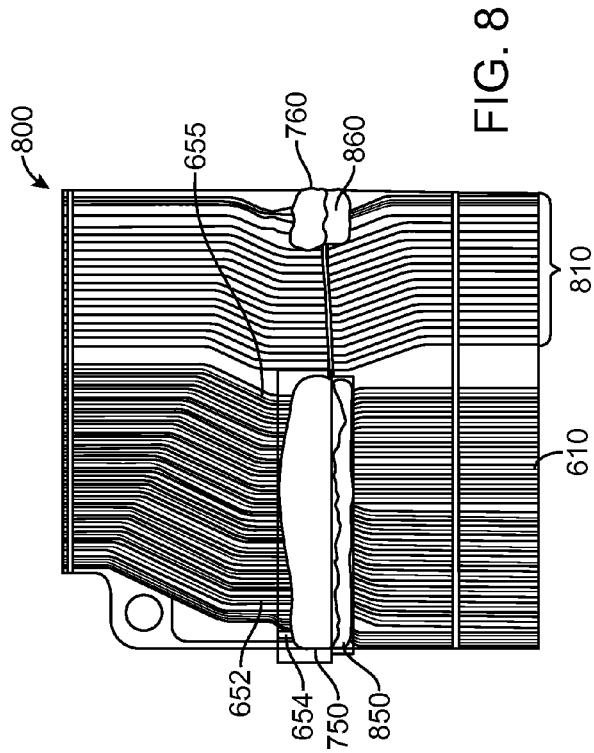


FIG. 8

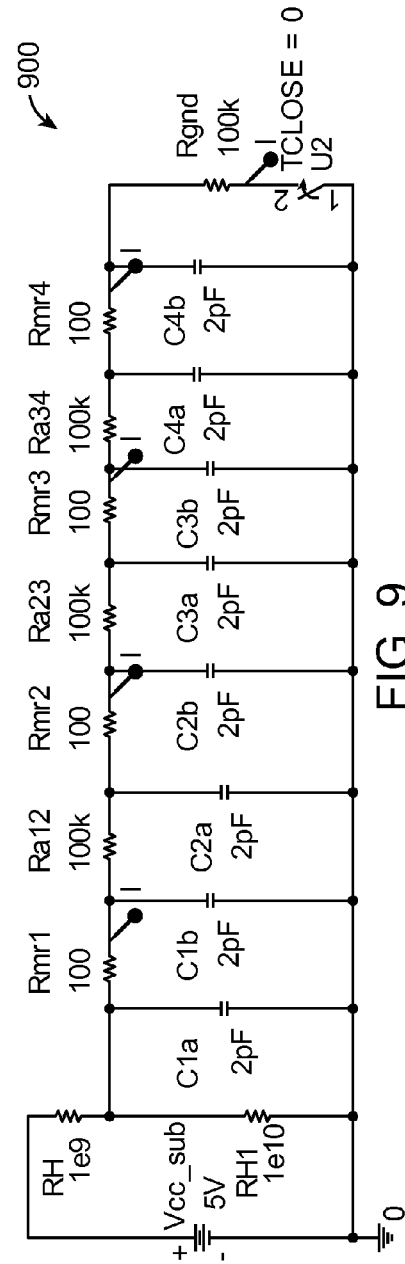


FIG. 9

1000

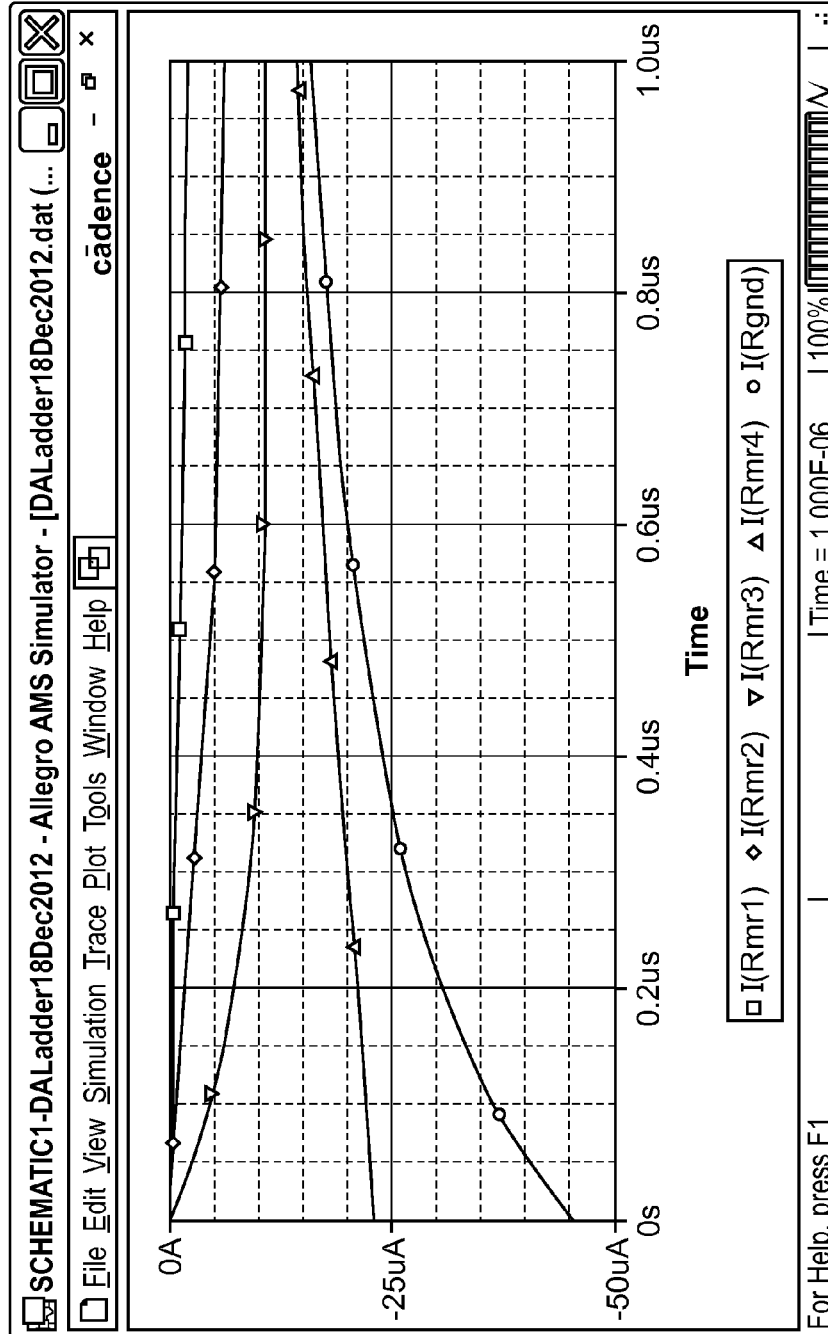


FIG. 10

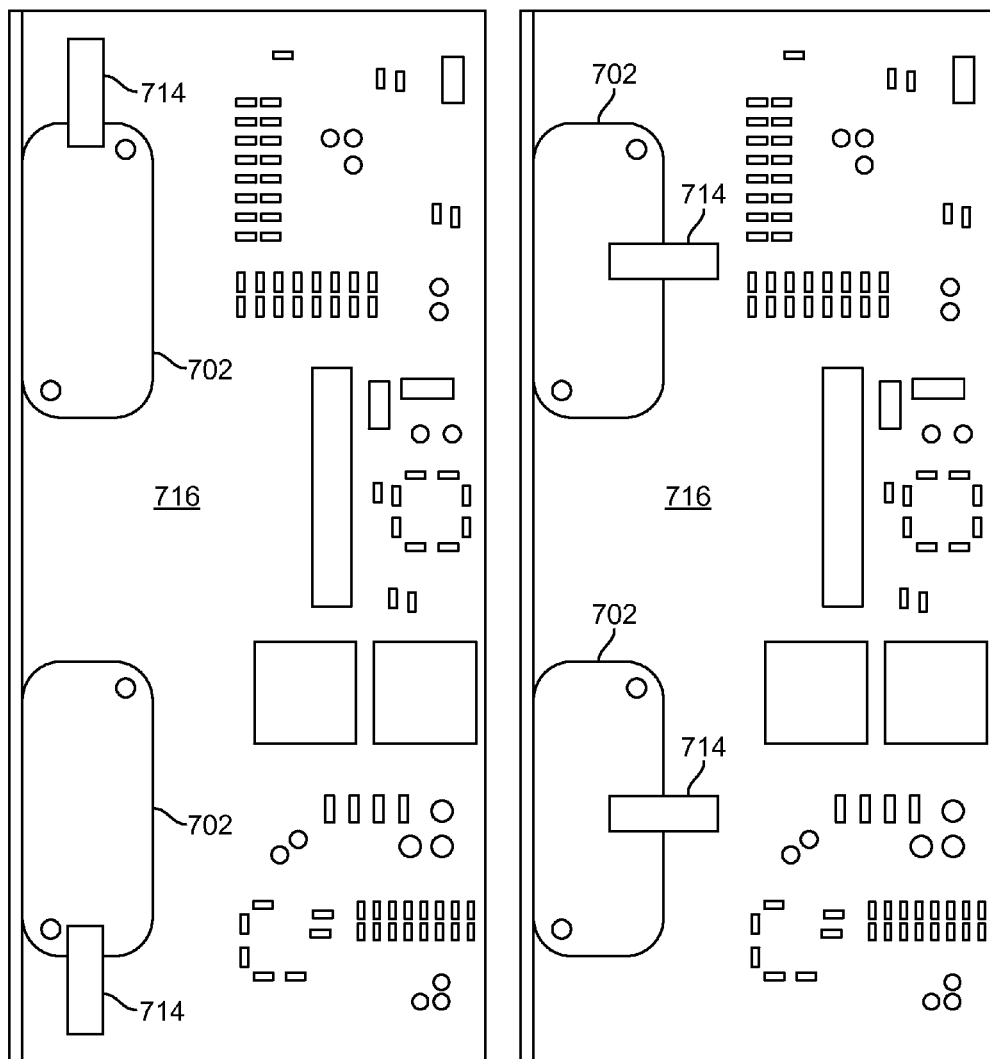


FIG. 11

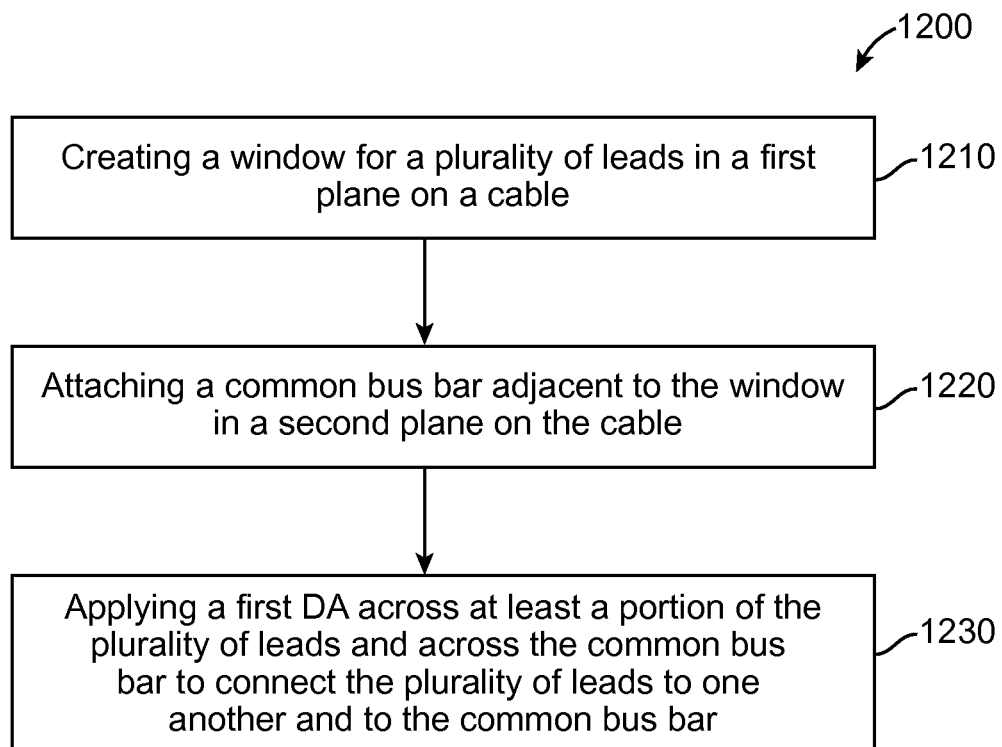


FIG. 12

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PROTECTION OF DEVICE FROM ELECTROSTATIC DISCHARGE (ESD) DAMAGE

BACKGROUND

Embodiments of the invention relate to electrostatic discharge (ESD) protection, and in particular, protection of a cabled device from ESD using dissipative adhesive (DA) and a bus bar.

Magnetoresistive sensors (MR) and other devices that are sensitive to ESD damage are often connected to a cable in order to electrically connect them to a device (such as a tape or disk drive) for operation. Such devices are extremely sensitive to ESD damage.

BRIEF SUMMARY

Embodiments of the invention relate to electrostatic discharge (ESD) protection. One embodiment includes a first dissipative adhesive (DA) connected to at least a portion of multiple leads in a first plane of a flexible cable in a coverage area for providing ESD protection to at least one element of an electronic device. A common bus bar is connected to the leads in a second plane of the flexible cable. Conductivity of the common bus bar is greater than conductivity of the first DA and the first plane and the second plane are different planes of the flexible cable.

Another embodiment comprises a method for providing ESD protection to an element of an electronic device. One embodiment comprises creating a window for a plurality of leads in a first plane on a cable. In one embodiment, a common bus bar is attached adjacent to the window in a second plane on the cable. In one embodiment, a first dissipative adhesive (DA) is applied across at least a portion of the plurality of leads to connect the plurality of leads to one another and to the common bus bar. In one embodiment, at least some leads of the plurality of leads are operatively coupled to an element of an electronic device.

One embodiment comprises an ESD device. In one embodiment, a first DA is coupled to a portion of leads on a flexible cable in a first plane of the flexible cable. In one embodiment, a bus bar in a second plane of the flexible cable is coupled to the leads via the first DA. In one embodiment, conductivity of the bus bar is greater than conductivity of the first DA.

These and other features, aspects and advantages of the present invention will become understood with reference to the following description, appended claims and accompanying figures.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 illustrates a schematic diagram of a simplified tape drive system according to one embodiment;

FIG. 2 illustrates a side view of a flat-lapped, bi-directional, two-module magnetic tape head according to one embodiment;

FIG. 2A is a tape bearing surface view taken from Line 2A of FIG. 2;

FIG. 2B is a detailed view taken from Circle 2B of FIG. 2A;

FIG. 2C is a detailed view of a partial tape bearing surface of a pair of modules according to one embodiment;

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FIG. 3 illustrates a schematic of a ladder structure for a dissipative adhesive (DA) connection according to one embodiment;

FIG. 4 illustrates a schematic of connecting magnetoresistive sensors (MR) for an electronic device to a common bus bar according to one embodiment;

FIG. 5 illustrates resistance data for DA connections without a common bus bar, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 6 illustrates a metal bus bar applied to a flexible cable, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 7 illustrates a 2.5% DA applied across a window of leads on a flexible cable, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 8 illustrates a DA bus bar with 5% DA and 2.5% DA connecting leads on a flexible cable, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 9 illustrates a circuit for a ladder structure, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 10 illustrates discharge current data for the ladder circuit shown in FIG. 9, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 11 illustrates a cable interfacing with a circuit board, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention; and

FIG. 12 is a flowchart showing a process for applying a DA and a bus bar on leads on a flexible cable, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The following description is made for the purpose of illustrating the general principles of the present invention and is not meant to limit the inventive concepts claimed herein. Further, particular features described herein can be used in combination with other described features in each of the various possible combinations and permutations.

Unless otherwise specifically defined herein, all terms are to be given their broadest possible interpretation including meanings implied from the specification as well as meanings understood by those skilled in the art and/or as defined in dictionaries, treatises, etc.

Embodiments of the invention relate to electrostatic discharge (ESD) protection. According to an embodiment, a first dissipative adhesive (DA) connected to at least a portion of multiple leads in a first plane of a flexible cable in a coverage area for providing ESD protection to at least one element of an electronic device. A common bus bar is connected to the leads in a second plane of the flexible cable. Conductivity of the common bus bar is greater than conductivity of the first DA and the first plane and the second plane are different planes of the flexible cable.

FIG. 1 illustrates a simplified tape drive 100 of a tape-based data storage system, which may be employed in the context of one or more embodiments. While one specific implementation of a tape drive is shown in FIG. 1, it should be noted that the embodiments described herein may be implemented in the context of any type of tape drive system.

As shown, a tape supply cartridge 120 and a take-up reel 121 are provided to support a tape 122. One or more of the reels may form part of a removable cassette and are not necessarily part of the system 100. The tape drive, such as that illustrated in FIG. 1, may further include drive motor(s) to drive the tape supply cartridge 120 and the take-up reel 121 to move the tape 122 over a tape head 126 of any type.

Guides 125 guide the tape 122 across the tape head 126. Such tape head 126 is in turn coupled to a controller assembly 128 via a cable 130. The controller 128 typically

controls head functions such as servo following, writing, reading, etc. The cable **130** may include read/write circuits to transmit data to the head **126** to be recorded on the tape **122** and to receive data read by the head **126** from the tape **122**. An actuator **132** controls position of the head **126** relative to the tape **122**.

An interface **134** may also be provided for communication between the tape drive and a host (integral or external) to send and receive the data and for controlling the operation of the tape drive and communicating the status of the tape drive to the host, all as will be understood by those of skill in the art.

By way of example, FIG. 2 illustrates a side view of a flat-lapped, bi-directional, two-module magnetic tape head **200** which may be implemented in the context of one or more embodiments. As shown, the head includes a pair of bases **202**, each equipped with a module **204**, and fixed at a small angle α with respect to each other. The bases are typically "U-beams" that may be adhesively coupled together. Each module **204** includes a substrate **204A** and a closure **204B** with a thin film portion, commonly referred to as a "gap" in which the readers and/or writers **206** are formed. In use, a tape **208** is moved over the modules **204** along a media (tape) bearing surface **209** in the manner shown for reading and writing data on the tape **208** using the readers and writers. The wrap angle θ of the tape **208** at edges going onto and exiting the flat media support surfaces **209** are usually between $\frac{1}{8}$ degree and $4\frac{1}{2}$ degrees.

The substrates **204A** are typically constructed of a wear resistant material, such as a ceramic. The closures **204B** made of the same or similar ceramic as the substrates **204A**.

The readers and writers may be arranged in a piggyback configuration. The readers and writers may also be arranged in an interleaved configuration. Alternatively, each array of channels may be readers or writers only. Any of these arrays may contain one or more servo readers. Cables **205** couple the readers and/or writers **206** to a controller.

Tape heads with read, write, and servo elements exemplify the concept of an electronic device with multiple elements requiring different diode types. For example, inductive writers do not require diode protection, and attaching diodes across the leads of a writer element will often be deleterious to the writer performance, as the diodes will shunt current away from the writers, decreasing the writer currents for a given applied voltage/current. Often, servo and reader elements operate under different current/voltage (IV) characteristics and thus require different diode designs. Therefore, a single diode chip which is capable of being used with a variety of magnetic head designs and could be wired to the magnetic head in a particular way to avoid negative consequences of attaching diodes across certain elements would be preferable.

FIG. 2A illustrates the tape bearing surface **209** of one of the modules **204** taken from Line 2A of FIG. 2. A representative tape **208** is shown in dashed lines. The module **204** is preferably long enough to be able to support the tape as the head steps between data bands.

In this example, the tape **208** includes 4-22 data bands, e.g., with 16 data bands and 17 servo tracks **210**, as shown in FIG. 2A on an example, one-half inch wide tape **208**. Current linear tape-open (LTO) products include 4 data bands and 5 servo tracks. The data bands are defined between servo tracks **210**. Each data band may include a number of data tracks, for example 96 data tracks (not shown). During read/write operations, the readers and/or writers **206** are positioned within one of the data bands. Outer readers, sometimes called servo readers, read the

servo tracks **210**. The servo signals are in turn used to keep the readers and/or writers **206** aligned with a particular track during the read/write operations.

FIG. 2B depicts a plurality of readers and/or servos and/or writers **206** formed in a gap **218** on the module **204** in Circle 2B of FIG. 2A. As shown, the array of readers and writers **206** includes, for example, 16 writers **214**, 16 readers **216** and two servo readers **212**, though the number of elements may vary. Illustrative embodiments include 8, 16, 32, 33, 40, 64, 66, etc. readers and/or writers **206** per array. A preferred embodiment includes 33 readers per array and/or 33 writers per array, 32 of which are used for forward and 32 for reverse tape motion. This allows the tape to travel more slowly, thereby reducing speed-induced tracking and mechanical difficulties. While the readers and writers may be arranged in a piggyback configuration as shown in FIG. 2B, the readers **216** and writers **214** may also be arranged in an interleaved configuration. Alternatively, each array of readers and/or writers **206** may be readers or writers only, and the arrays may contain one or more servo readers **212**. In some applications, a module comprises only readers and the writers are disposed on separate modules. For read-while write verification for both forward and reverse tape motion across the read modules when the readers and writers are on different modules, either two reader modules surrounding one write module or two write modules surrounding one read module are built into a head. As noted by considering FIGS. 2 and 2A-B together, each module **204** may include a complementary set of readers and/or writers **206** for such things as bi-directional reading and writing, read-while-write capability, backward compatibility, etc.

FIG. 2C shows a partial tape bearing surface view of complimentary modules of a magnetic tape head **200** according to one embodiment. In this embodiment, each module has a plurality of read/write (R/W) pairs in a piggyback configuration formed on a common substrate **204A** and an optional electrically insulative layer **236**. The writers, exemplified by the write head **214** and the readers, exemplified by the read head **216**, are aligned parallel to a direction of travel of a tape medium thereacross to form an R/W pair, exemplified by the R/W pair **222**.

Several R/W pairs **222** may be present, such as 8, 16, 32 pairs, etc. The R/W pairs **222** as shown are linearly aligned in a direction generally perpendicular to a direction of tape travel thereacross. However, the pairs may also be aligned diagonally, etc. Servo readers **212** are positioned on the outside of the array of R/W pairs, the function of which is well known.

Generally, the magnetic tape medium moves in either a forward or reverse direction as indicated by arrow **220**. The magnetic tape medium and head assembly **200** operate in a transducing relationship in the manner well-known in the art. The piggybacked MR head assembly **200** includes two thin-film modules **224** and **226** of generally identical construction.

Modules **224** and **226** are joined together with a space present between closures **204B** thereof (partially shown) to form a single physical unit to provide read-while-write capability by activating the writer of the leading module and reader of the trailing module aligned with the writer of the leading module parallel to the direction of tape travel relative thereto. When a module **224**, **226** of a piggyback head **200** is constructed, layers are formed in the gap **218** created above an electrically conductive substrate **204A** (partially shown), e.g., of AlTiC, in generally the following order for the R/W pairs **222**: an insulating layer **236**, a first shield **232** typically of an iron alloy such as NiFe (permal-

loy), CZT or Al—Fe—Si (Sendust), a sensor **234** for sensing a data track on a magnetic medium, a second shield **238** typically of a nickel-iron alloy (e.g., 80/20 Permalloy), first and second writer pole tips **228**, **230**, and a coil (not shown).

The first and second writer poles **228**, **230** may be fabricated from high magnetic moment materials such as 45/55 NiFe. Note that these materials are provided by way of example only, and other materials may be used. Additional layers such as insulation between the shields and/or pole tips and an insulation layer surrounding the sensor may be present. Illustrative materials for the insulation include alumina and other oxides, insulative polymers, etc.

One method of protecting magnetoresistive sensors (MR) is to connect all the elements to a grounding wire which can then be connected to the ground of the external device (e.g., a tester or a drive) prior to connecting the elements directly to dissipate any voltage differentials between the cabled device (CMOD) and the external electronics. One method to connect the devices together is to apply a DA device across all elements. When the leads are side-by-side, then the resistance to the grounding tab will be lowest for the lead closest to the grounding tab and highest for the lead the furthest away. Thus, the dissipation currents and times will be different for each element. One means of solving the problem is with a common bus bar. In some applications, the geometry of the leads on the cable are such that in order to introduce a common bus bar, the leads would need to pass into another layer in the structure to make the connections. The leads and common bus bar, however, would both need to be exposed to an outer layer of the cable in order to apply the dissipative adhesive. In many cases, there are geometrical or functional restrictions on adding the leads on the available metal layers in the cable structure. For example, many cables have a connector on the outer metal layer, and the connector precludes passing the leads to a common bus bar on the metalized layer used to solder or otherwise connect the leads to the connector. Also, many cables used for high speed electrical signals on the leads have a ground plane on a layer either above or below the leads (e.g., an additional metal layer). In order to add the leads to the layer containing the ground plane would require the ground plane to be disrupted, which can then lead to noise pickup and the degradation of the performance of the device to which the cable leads are attached by decreasing signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) of the device in operation. In other cases, the passing of the leads underneath other wires could also lead to noise pickup, especially with high frequency signals, and again a decrease in the functional SNR.

In one embodiment, due to the geometry dilemma of multiple cable layers, a window is opened on the outer cover layer of the cable, exposing the leads, and a bus bar is attached to the outer surface of the cable near the exposed leads. This embodiment avoids crossing lines in the existing metal layers and enables the application of the DA across the leads. The common bus bar is in a different plane than that of the leads. In one or more embodiments, since the DA is “fluid” when applied, the DA conforms to the different surfaces, electrically joining the leads in one plane with the common bus bar in the second plane.

One or more embodiments apply a bus bar on the surface of a flexible cable. In one embodiment, the bus bar may comprise a metal strip or a dissipative means with a higher conductivity than the dissipative means used to connect the parallel leads attached to the sensitive devices (e.g., an MR). In one or more embodiments, placing the common bus bar

strip on the external surface of the flexible cable eliminates the need to pass the leads into a separate layer and pass them underneath other wire traces.

FIG. 3 shows a schematic of a ladder structure **300** for a DA connection, according to one embodiment. In one embodiment, the resistance to ground for a track increases linearly with the distance to ground, and the current through a given sensor (e.g., an MR) during a discharge of connecting the ground tab to an external ground will increase the closer the element is to the grounding tab. In FIG. 3, in one example, R_{mr} is of the order of 100Ω , R_b is of the order of 7Ω , and R_a is of the order of $100\text{ k}\Omega$. In one example, to first order, the sensor N from the grounding tab will have a resistance-to-ground of $N \cdot R_a$. With the ladder structure **300**, the currents passing through and the discharge times of each sensor along the ladder structure will be different.

FIG. 4 shows the schematic **400** of connecting the sensors to a common bus bar. Taking the resistance R_g to be the direct connection from each sensor to the common bus bar, to first order, the current to ground will be I_o for all devices. The disadvantages of the ladder structure as compared to the bus bar in schematic **400** may include Adj-Track is an order of magnitude lower than Track-Gnd, wide distribution of track-gnd, discharge currents depend on location in the ladder, and no easy/obvious means of adding a common bus bar internal to the cable. Some of the advantages of the bus bar over the ladder structure **300** may include tighter distribution of the track-gnd, track-gnd is closer to Adj-track, and discharge currents are the same for all tracks.

FIG. 5 illustrates resistance data without a common bus bar for DA concentrations of 3% (A), 4% (B) and 5% (C). Table 1 shows observed resistances for a 3% DA. In one example, the internal resistances are all low at about $7.5\text{ k}\Omega$ with a tight distribution. The resistance data shown comprises adjacent track data **510**, internal track data **520**, track-ground data **530** and servo-ground track data **540**. In one example, the adjacent track data **510** is about seven (7) times higher with an average of about $50\text{ kohm}(\Omega)$. The track-ground is eight (8) times higher still at about $400\text{ k}\Omega$ with a very wide distribution ranging from 100 to $800\text{ k}\Omega$. The servo-Gnd graph **540** shows the servo-Gnd is about 10% of the Trk-Gnd data **530** at about 45 kn . The large variation in Trk-Gnd **530**, Servo-Gnd **540** and Adjacent-track **510** make the implementation difficult in a manufacturing line where it is best to have these resistances similar.

TABLE 1

Resistances for DA with no common bus bar & 3% DA				
	Internal	Adj-trk	Trk-Gnd	Srv-Gnd
Average (k Ω)	7.5	50	400	45
Max (k Ω)	7.5	80	800	50
Min (k Ω)	7.5	40	100	30

FIG. 6 illustrates a device **600** including a metal bus bar **630** (e.g., a common bus bar) applied to a cable **610** (e.g., a flexible cable), in accordance with one embodiment. In one example, a metal bus bar **630** comprises a copper (Cu) strip with a pressure sensitive adhesive (PSA) on the back side of the Cu strip. In other embodiments, other metalized PSAs may be used. In one example, the bus bar **630** is attached to the cable **610** near (e.g., adjacent, next to, etc.) a window **640** exposing the leads (e.g., MR2 leads **651**, MR1 leads **652**, MR 16 leads **655** (FIG. 7) ground wire **653**, AC ground **654** (FIG. 7), AC ground **660**, etc.).

FIG. 7 illustrates a device **700** including a 2.5% DA **750** applied across the window **640** of leads on a cable **610**, in accordance with one embodiment. In one embodiment, a DA with 2.5% DA **750** comprising carbon content was mixed up and applied across the window **640**. In one embodiment, the 2.5% DA **750** connects the leads to one another and to the bus bar **630**. In one embodiment, a 2.5% DA **760** is applied across the AC ground **660**. In one example, Table 2 shows observed resistances for the device **700**. In one example, all resistances are close to one another.

TABLE 2

Resistances for 2.5% DA with External Cu strip bus bar				
	Internal	Adj-trk	Trk-Gnd	Srv-Gnd
Average (k Ω)	7.47	174	309	94
Stdev (k Ω)	0.01	22	76	
Max (k Ω)	7.49	202	403	
Min (k Ω)	7.45	128	140	

FIG. 8 illustrates a device **800** including a DA bus bar **850** with 5% DA and 2.5% DA **750** connecting leads on a cable **610**, in accordance with an embodiment. In one example, device **800** shows an example of a high conductivity DA (5%) Bus bar and DA of 2.5% to connect the leads. In one example, the DA **750** and **850** are not continuous to the 2nd servo section **810**. The 2nd servo connection **810** is electrically connected to the grounding tab via a 2.5% DA **760** and ACgnd (**660**)-5% DA-Gnd **860**. Table 3 shows observed resistances for the device **800**.

TABLE 3

Resistances for 5% DA with External Bus Bar				
	Internal	Adj-trk	Trk-Gnd	Srv-Gnd
Average (k Ω)	7.38	236	533	186
Stdev (k Ω)	0.37	43.7	156	129
Max (k Ω)	7.50	304	751	277
Min (k Ω)	5.95	156	179	95

In one embodiment, the conductivity of the bus bar **630** is greater than conductivity of the DA **750/850**. In one embodiment, the bus bar **630** is coupled to an outer surface of the cable **610**. In one embodiment, the metal of the PSA tape of the bus bar **630** may comprise copper, aluminum, iron, etc. In one embodiment, the bus bar **630** may be deposited on the surface of the outer layer of the cable **610** via deposition, such as sputtering, chemical vapor deposition, electroplating, etc. In one embodiment, the bus bar **610** may comprise a conductive paint. In one embodiment, the bus bar **610** placement on the outer surface of the cable **610** eliminates passing the leads into a separate layer and passing the leads underneath trace wires. If the concentration of carbon in the common bus bar **630** is too low, then it will be ineffective in distributing the charges along the length of common bus bar **630** and the common bus bar **630** will not function as required. If the concentration of carbon is too high, then the viscosity of the carbon-polymer will be too high to either mix homogeneously or possibly to even mix at all. In one embodiment, the carbon mixture for the DA **750/850** may be in the range of 2.5% to 5%. In other embodiments, the percentage of carbon in the DA mixture may be in other ranges, such as about 2%-6%, 1.7%-5.7%, etc. In one embodiment, a first DA (e.g., DA **750**) comprises a com-

pound having carbon in a range of 2.0% to 3%, and a second DA (e.g., DA **850**) comprises a compound having carbon in a range of 3.5% to 5%.

FIG. 9 illustrates a circuit **900** for a ladder structure, in accordance with one embodiment. In one embodiment, Rmrj is the MR resistance, for example 100 Ω . In one embodiment, Ramn is the DA resistance between MR m to MR n, which is, for example 100 K Ω , where m and n are positive integers. In one embodiment, Rgnd is the resistance from Rmr4 to ground. In one embodiment, Cka and Ckb are the capacitance to ground for the kth MR element, where k is a positive integer.

FIG. 10 illustrates discharge current data **1000** for the ladder circuit shown in FIG. 9, in accordance with one embodiment. The discharge current data **1000** shows that the charges accumulate for the MR elements closer to ground as compared to the elements furthest from ground.

FIG. 11 illustrates a cable interfacing with a circuit board, in accordance with one embodiment. In one approach, a DA grounding lead **712** is provided with the cable **702**, and the lead **712** may also be exposed by a window (e.g., window **640**, FIG. 6), and may be coupled to a tab **714** for grounding the DA (e.g., DA **750/850**) once it is applied, thereby grounding elements of an electronic device. In one embodiment, this may be accomplished by coupling the tab **714** to a ground on a circuit board **716**, as shown in FIG. 11. There are various positions available for placement of the tab **714** as illustrated. Of course, the actual configuration and layout of the cable **702** and the circuit board **716** may dictate which placement is preferred over another, according to some approaches.

In some approaches, the cable **702** may include a grounding lead coupled to a ground of the electronic device for grounding the at least one element of the electronic device through the DA **750/850**. In further approaches, the grounding lead may be an integral part of the cable **702** located at least partially beneath a sheath covering the cable **702**. In one example, the grounding lead may run beneath a cable sheathing until it reaches an end of the cable **702** at which point it may be exposed, thereby allowing the grounding lead to be grounded.

FIG. 12 is a flowchart showing a process **1200** for applying a DA (e.g., DA **750**) and a bus bar (e.g., bus bar **630**, DA **850**, Etc.) on leads on a flexible cable (e.g., cable **610**), in accordance with one embodiment. In one embodiment, in block **1210** ESD protection is provided to an element (e.g., an MR) of an electronic device by opening a window for a plurality of leads in a first plane on a cable (e.g., a flexible cable **610**). In one embodiment, in block **1220**, a common bus bar is attached adjacent to the window in a second plane on the cable which is different from the plane containing the metal leads. In one embodiment, the plane containing the metal leads and the plane containing the common bus bar is separated by the outer cover layer of the flexible cable. In one embodiment, the thickness of the cover-layer is 10 to 25 microns, so the separation of the layer containing the leads and the layer containing the common bus bar is of the order of 10 to 25 microns. In one embodiment, the separation between the edge of one lead and the next lead is of the order of 50 to 100 microns, so the vertical separation between the metal leads and the layer containing the common bus bar is of the same order of magnitude as the horizontal separation between the leads.

In one embodiment, in block **1230**, a first DA (e.g., DA **750**) is applied across at least a portion of the plurality of leads and the common bus bar to connect the plurality of leads to one another and to the bus bar. In one embodiment,

the designer of the process has the common bus bar aligned in the process of block 1220 an appropriate distance away from the edge of the window on the cover layer to achieve the desired final resistance between the leads and the common bus bar through the first DA depending on the resistivity of the DA and the thickness of the DA, with all the appropriate tolerances taken into consideration. In one embodiment, at least some leads of the plurality of leads are operatively coupled to the element of an electronic device. In one embodiment, the bus bar is coupled to an outer surface of the flexible cable (e.g., a second plane), and conductivity of the bus bar is greater than conductivity of the DA. In one embodiment, the DA connects the plurality of leads to one another in a first plane and connects the leads to the bus bar in a second plane, and the bus bar comprises a metal, a metal PSA tape, a DA, a conductive paint, or other similar materials. In one example the metal or metal tape is deposited on the surface of an outer layer (e.g., a second plane) of the flexible cable via deposition comprising sputtering, chemical vapor deposition, electroplating, etc. In one embodiment, the element of the electronic device comprises a read transducer of a magnetic head.

In one embodiment, the DA is applied across exposed (e.g., via a window) leads on a first plane of a cable. In one embodiment, the DA may include a polymeric thin film, electrically conductive fillers dispersed in the polymeric thin film, and a solvent for controlling a viscosity of the DA. In one embodiment, at least a portion of the solvent is evaporated from the DA. The solvent enables the DA to form around the exposed leads of the cable. In one approach, at least some of the leads may be coupled to an element of an electronic device. After the DA has formed around the leads, the solvent may be evaporated out so that the DA obtains a structure similar to an elastomer, in one approach.

According to one embodiment, the DA may be applied via an application method selected from the group consisting of: syringing, silk screening, painting, and spraying. Of course, any other application method known in the art may be used as well. In one approach, the solvent may be xylene, the polymeric thin film may be a polyurethane, and the electrically conductive fillers may be carbon black. Of course, any other combination of components may be used.

In one approach, the DA may have a viscosity in a range from about 10 CP to about 2000 CP prior to evaporation of the solvent therefrom, and more preferably in a range from about 30 CP to about 250 CP prior to evaporation of the solvent therefrom, enabling the DA to flow around a surface area of the exposed leads of the cable in a coverage area. The coverage area is a portion of the exposed leads where the DA is applied. In one embodiment, the coverage area may be as close to 100% as possible. In other embodiments, and as dictated by the particular application in which the DA is being used, the coverage area may be greater than about 95%, greater than about 90%, greater than about 80%, etc.

In another embodiment, the DA may have a lead-to-lead resistance in a range from about 50 k Ω to about 10 M Ω about 10 k Ω to about 100 M Ω , or any other range therebetween or as suited to the particular application for which the ESD adhesive is being used.

According to some embodiments, MR sensor protection is immediate once the DA and bus bar are applied, which allows for the DA and bus bar to be applied before the magnetic head is attached to the cable, providing protection through the entire assembly process. In one embodiment, the materials used in the DA and bus bar cause no physical change to the materials used in the cable or the connector assembly. In one embodiment, the low viscosity of the DA

allows for increased surface contact with read and/or write transducer leads, thereby providing better protection than more viscous materials; if the viscosity of the ESD adhesive changes, it may be returned to an original viscosity with the addition of a common solvent; the low viscosity of the DA results in desired resistivities not achievable via other materials; the choice of a polymeric material thinned by a solvent results in superior flow properties while also providing a desired resistivity.

It will be clear that the various features of the foregoing methodologies may be combined in any way, creating a plurality of combinations from the descriptions presented above.

The terminology used herein is for the purpose of describing particular embodiments only and is not intended to be limiting of the invention. As used herein, the singular forms “a”, “an” and “the” are intended to include the plural forms as well, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. It will be further understood that the terms “comprises” and/or “comprising,” when used in this specification, specify the presence of stated features, integers, steps, operations, elements, and/or components, but do not preclude the presence or addition of one or more other features, integers, steps, operations, elements, components, and/or groups thereof.

It should be emphasized that the above-described embodiments of the present invention, particularly, any “preferred” embodiments, are merely possible examples of implementations, merely set forth for a clear understanding of the principles of the invention.

Many variations and modifications may be made to the above-described embodiment(s) of the invention without departing substantially from the spirit and principles of the invention. All such modifications and variations are intended to be included herein within the scope of this disclosure and the present invention and protected by the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus, comprising:

a first dissipative adhesive (DA) coupled to a portion of a plurality of leads that are exposed in a first plane of a flexible cable in a coverage area, the first DA provides electrostatic discharge (ESD) protection to at least one element of an electronic device; and

a common bus bar coupled to the portion of the plurality of leads via a second DA that is coupled over at least a portion of the first DA, the common bus bar disposed in a second plane of the flexible cable, and the first DA electrically joins the portion of the plurality of leads in the first plane with the common bus bar in the second plane,

wherein conductivity of the bus bar is greater than conductivity of the first DA, and the second plane is an outer layer cover of the flexible cable.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein coupling of the common bus bar to the portion of the plurality of leads via the first DA and the second DA avoids crossing lines in existing metal layers of the flexible cable, the first plane comprises an inner layer of the flexible cable exposed via a window opening, and the common bus bar is coupled to the outer surface of the flexible cable.

3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first DA connects the plurality of leads to one another.

4. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the common bus bar comprises a metal, wherein the metal is deposited on the flexible cable via one of sputtering, chemical vapor deposition or electroplating.

5. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the common bus bar comprises a conductive paint.

6. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the common bus bar comprises a metalized pressure sensitive adhesive (PSA) tape.

7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the common bus bar placement on the outer surface of the flexible cable eliminates passing the plurality of leads into a separate layer and passing the plurality of leads underneath trace wires. 5

8. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the at least one element of the electronic device is a read transducer of a magnetic head. 10

9. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first DA comprises a compound having carbon in a range of 2.0% to 3%.

10. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the second DA comprises a compound having carbon in a range of 3.5% to 5%. 15

11. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the common bus bar is electrically coupled to a grounding tab.

12. An electrostatic discharge (ESD) device, comprising:
a first dissipative adhesive (DA) coupled to an exposed portion of leads in a first plane of a flexible cable; and 20
a bus bar in a second plane of the flexible cable coupled to the exposed portion of the leads via the first DA, and at least a portion of the first DA is coupled over at least a portion of the bus bar,

wherein the second plane is an outer layer cover of the flexible cable and conductivity of the bus bar is greater than conductivity of the first DA. 25

13. The ESD device of claim 12, wherein the first DA electrically connects the bus bar to the exposed port of the leads, and the bus bar comprises one of: a second DA, a 30 metal, a conductive paint and a metalized pressure sensitive adhesive (PSA) tape.

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